



COLLEGE DRINKING

Binge Drinking

43% of college students say they are binge drinkers (defined as 5 or more drinks in a row for men and 4 or more for women in the previous two weeks) and 21% say they binge frequently. Wechsler, H., G. et. al. Changes in binge drinking and related problems among American college students between 1993 and 1997: Results of the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study. *Journal of American College Health* 47:57-68. 1998.

College binge drinking rates:

48% of men

39% of women

47% of whites

38% of Latinos

25% of Asian/Pacific Islanders

18% of African Americans

37% of "other" ethnic groups.

Ibid.

A national study of binge drinking found that athletes have the highest rates of binge drinking of any group on college campuses. Wechsler H, Davenport AE, Dowdall & W, Grossman SJ, Zanakos SI. Binge Drinking, Tobacco and Illicit Drug Use and Involvement in College Athletics: A Survey of Students at 140 American Colleges. *Journal of American College Health* (in press).

An estimated one-third of American colleges can be classified as "high-binge" schools, where more than half the student body are binge drinkers. At high-binge colleges, 9 out of 10 students living on campus have suffered some ill effect, such as fights, assaults, and property damage, because of others' drinking, and nearly 70% have had their studying or sleep interrupted. Wechsler H. Binge Drinking on American College Campuses: A New Look at an Old Problem. Boston: Harvard School of Public Health, 1995.

A large national study of binge drinking found that sorority members were almost twice as likely to be binge drinkers compared with non-sorority women (62% compared with 35%). Among men, 75% of fraternity members were binge drinkers, whereas 45% of other male students were. Ibid.

Binge drinking in high school, especially among men, is strongly predictive of binge drinking in college. Ibid.

-over-

S e x u a l A s s a u l t

At least 3% of perpetrators and 46% of victims had been drinking prior to college campus date rapes. Martin, S. The epidemiology of alcohol-related interpersonal violence. *Alcohol, Health and Research World* 16(3): 230-7, 1992.

Interviews with fraternity members found a tendency to give alcohol to women on the theory that women who were drinking would be less resistant to sexual advances. Martin P. and R. Hummer. Fraternities and Rape on Campus. *Gender & Society* 3(4): 457-453. 1989.

Male members of college fraternities report believing that they are more likely to attempt to force a woman to have sex with them if they have been drinking alcohol. Fromme, K. and Wendel, J. Beliefs about the effects of alcohol on involvement in coercive and consenting sexual activities. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25(23):2099-21117. 1995.

How much do they drink?

College students drink an estimated 4 billion cans of beer each year, and the total amount of alcohol consumed by them annually is 430 million gallons, which is enough for each college and university to fill an Olympic-size pool. Eigan, L. "Alcohol Practices, Policies and Potentials of American Colleges and Universities," Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 1991.

Each year, college students spend \$5.5 billion on alcohol (mostly beer). This is more than they spend on books, soda, coffee, juice and milk combined. (Ibid.)

Effects on Student Life

A national survey of nearly 37,000 students at 66 four-year colleges and universities found that students with an A average consume a little more than three drinks per week, B students have almost five drinks per week, C students average more than six drinks per week, and students getting Ds or Fs consume nine drinks per week. Presley CA, Meilman PW, Cashin JR, Lyster R. Alcohol and Drugs on American College Campuses: Use, Consequences, and Perceptions of the Campus Environment, Volume 111, 1991-1993. Carbondale, IL: Core Institute, 1996.

80% of students who live on college campuses but do not binge drink report that they have experienced at least one second-hand effect of binge-drinking such as being the victim of an assault or an unwanted sexual advance, having property vandalized, or having sleep or study interrupted. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Alcohol Alert No. 29, 1995.